(c) whether Government have taken any steps to save the rhinos from poachers and if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of rhinos unauthorisedly killed in Kaziranga National Park is reported to be 41 in 1985, 41 in 1986 and 24 in 1987.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*See* below).

Statement

The steps taken to save rhinos from poachers include increased deployment of protection staff, consolidation and expansion of rhino habitats, procurement of vehicles, boars, arms and wireless sets for better communication and protection. For this a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Conservation of Rhinos in Assam with a VII Plan outlay of Rs. 5.0 crores, is being implemented.

Moreover, the rhinos in Manas Tiger Reserve are receiving protection under the aegis of Project Tiger and to which the Central Government is providing assistance. The Kaziranga National Park has received financial assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the protection and development of national parks and other sanctuaries holding rhino populations are receiving financial assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the protection and development of wildlife sanctuaries. Furthermore, funds have also been provided to the State Government of Assam on 50% cost sharing basis under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Control of Poaching and Illegal Trade in Wildlife.

The State Government have strengthened the protective safeguards and staff to protect the rhino population there.

Merger of Customs Division of Madurai with Trichy Collectorate

*395. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Customs Division of Madurai has been merged with the Trichy Collectorate;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any representation has been received from the traders of Madurai Division to reconsider the decision; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This was done to bring the Customs work in Tamil Nadu State, barring the areas under the jurisdiction of the Madras Custom House, under the control of one Collectorate.

(c) One of the Members of the Regional Advisory Committee of the Madurai Collectorate had pointed out in June 1987, that this might cause some inconvenience to public in Madurai. There has been no other representation from traders.

(d) A Customs Unit of Trichy Collectorate under an Additional Collector, who has the powers of a Collector of Customs, is functioning at Madurai and is available to the public for any clarification or redressal of grievances.